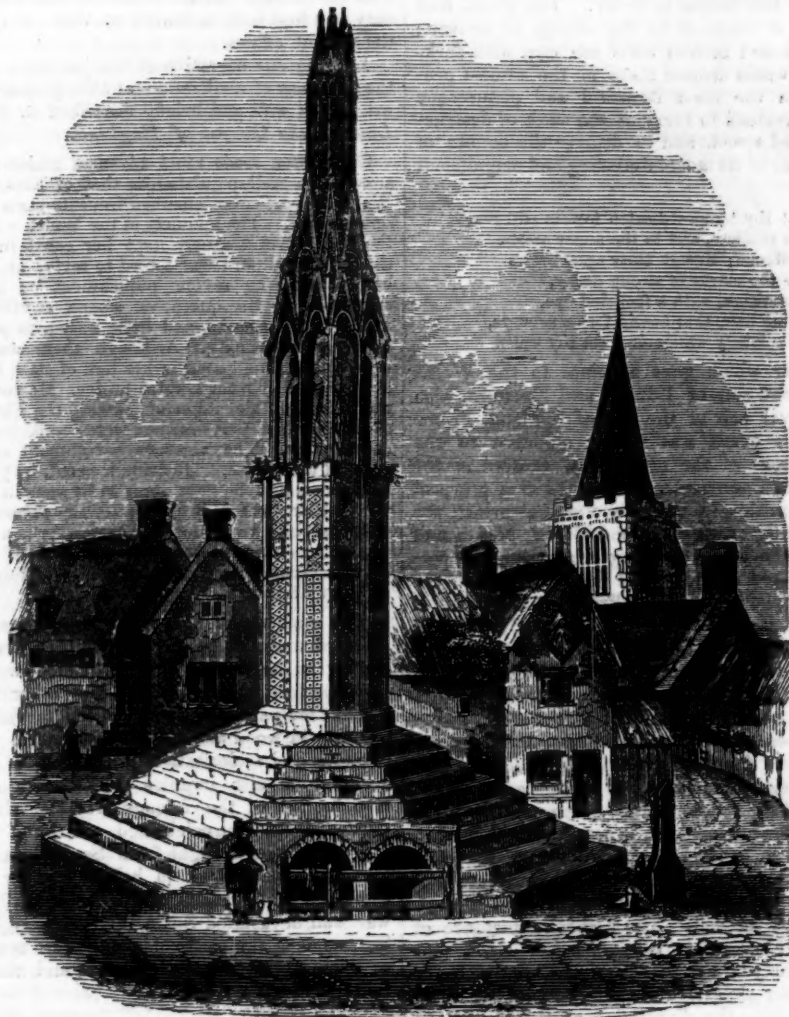




## QUEEN ELEANOR'S CROSSES.



THE CROSS AT GEDDINGTON.

### III.

WHEN Edward the First, by his vigorous treatment, not unmingled with cruelty, had established his dominion over Wales, he spent some time with his queen in that principality, making the magnificent castle of Conway\* his place of abode. This castle had been raised by Edward, who is supposed to have employed on this occasion the same architect who built the stronghold of Caernarvon†. However this may be, a more beautiful fortress than that of Conway could scarcely have been devised. One side is bounded by the river, another by a creek, full of water at every tide, and most beautifully shaded by hanging woods. The other two sides face the town. Nothing in fortified building can exceed its grandeur and relative proportions. Pennant describes it as

having two courts within; and on the outside eight vast projecting towers, each of which has a slender one of amazing elegance issuing from the top, within which was formerly a winding staircase. In one of the great towers is a fine window, in form of an arched recess, or bow, ornamented with pillars. Tradition names this recess Queen Eleanor's oriel; and that it formed the state toilet-place of this royal lady seems probable from the strain of an old poem, written at the period of her residence in Conway Castle.

In her Oryall there she was,  
Closyd well with royal glas;  
Fulfullyd it was with ymagery,  
Every windowe by and by,  
On each side had ther a gynne\*  
Sperde with manie a dyvers pynne.

\* See *Saturday Magazine*. Vol. III., p. 17.

† Ibid., Vol. V., p. 65

\* The gynnes were the fastenings of the casement, which were often secured by pynnes or pins of ivory.

Edward and Eleanora, accompanied by the chief English nobility and gentry, spent a Christmas in this splendid castle, in all the varied festivities of a luxurious court. Knights and fair ladies crowded the noble halls, and the voice of mirth and gaiety resounded throughout the stately edifice. At the same time severe edicts were issued against the conquered, but unsubdued Welsh; and these provoked the sarcasms and keen reproach of the bards of that country.

The castle of Conway, though still retaining traces of the splendour which marked it as the abode of Queen Eleanora, is now fast falling to decay. The grand roof of the state hall is supplied by the canopy of heaven; its ruined arches and broken walls are clad with darksome ivy, which winds around them in the utmost profusion, and with the most beautiful and picturesque effect. Time threatens to carry on the work of destruction with regretted speed, and to deprive the county of Caernarvon of one of its most interesting and magnificent ornaments.

Proud Pile! thy tempest-beaten towers still rear  
Their heads sublime, and to the angry storm  
Bid bold defiance; though their aged brows  
Bear visible the marks of strong decay,  
While Superstition, with a frenzied eye,  
And wildering fear, that horrid forms surveys,  
Affrights the lonely wanderer from thy walls.

The same year which gave a prince to the Welsh nation in the infant son of Edward and Eleanora, also deprived the royal pair of the heir of England, Prince Alphonso. This event was deeply afflictive to the Queen. The hopes of the nation now centred in the young Edward of Caernarvon; and in 1285 a prospect was opened of uniting in the person of that prince the sovereignty not only of England and Wales, but also of Scotland. On the death of King Alexander of Scotland, which occurred at the period just referred to, the Scottish crown devolved on the Princess Margaret of Norway, great-niece to Edward the First. By the consent of the nobles of Scotland, this princess was solemnly betrothed to Prince Edward of Caernarvon, and thus the British Island seemed likely to be happily settled under his sway. So peaceful did the affairs of the kingdom now appear that Edward the First and Eleanora were able to reside for three years in Aquitaine, where the seventh and eighth daughters of Eleanora were born. On their return to England, they were prevailed on, though with extreme reluctance, to devote their daughter, the Princess Mary, to the life of the convent. She was veiled at Ambresbury in 1289, when only ten years old, and at the same time her grandmother, Queen Eleanor of Provence, took the veil. The natural reluctance of the affectionate Eleanora to relinquish her child, (for which sacrifice she was not sufficiently imbued with the superstition of her times,) drew down upon her some warning epistles from the dignitaries of the church on the impropriety of withholding from heaven a chosen lamb from her numerous flock.

According to Wikes there were many grants made to the nun-princess, which do not accord with our ideas of the requirements of a nun. The forest of Savernake and other woodlands were granted for fire for her chamber; the port of Southampton was to supply tuns of wine, and of oil for her lamp; and many other devices were employed to enrich her.

In the year following the profession of the Princess Mary, the three elder daughters of Edward and Eleanora were betrothed or married, and much is said by the old historians of the magnificence of their nuptials. But we must turn from this brilliant scene to notice the political storm which was even then lowering over the united kingdoms. It was in the same year that Margaret, the young Queen of Scotland, was to be sent from Norway to the English Court, to be educated under the care of the gentle Eleanora. Driven by

violent weather to the Orkney Islands, and overcome by the fatigues of a boisterous voyage, the royal child there breathed her last, October, 1290. This event proved most calamitous to Scotland. A female poet says:—

The north wind sobs where Margaret sleeps,  
And still in tears of blood her memory Scotland steeps.

Edward instantly took decisive measures to secure the vacant crown of that kingdom. He had previously sent the bishop of Durham, with regents duly appointed, to take possession of Scotland in the name of Edward of Caernarvon and Margaret of Norway, but it was necessary to adopt new measures on this unhappy change in the face of affairs.

Leaving our narrative at this juncture, we shall notice the progress of civilization at this period of history, as we find it well and briefly described in STRICKLAND'S *Lives of the Queens of England*.

Civilization made rapid advances under the auspices of a court so well regulated as that of Eleanora of Castile. Wales, in particular, emerged from its state of barbarism in some degree. The manners of the Welsh were so savage at the time when Eleanora kept her court in North Wales, that her royal lord was forced to revive an ancient Welsh law, threatening severe punishment on any one "who should strike the queen, or snatch anything out of her hand." The English had little reason to pride themselves on their superiority. Although there was no danger of their beating the queen in her hall of state, they had pelted her predecessor from London-bridge. Moreover, in the commencement of the reign of Edward the First, London was so ill governed that murders were committed in the streets at noonday. The vigorous government of Edward soon crushed these evils. He made it penal, by proclamation, for any person but the great lords to be seen in London streets with either spear or buckler after the parson of St. Martin's le Grand had rung out his curfew bell, a proof that the curfew was rung as late as the time of Edward the First. It had become an instrument of civil police, rather than military despotism.

The same writer notices the encouragement given by Edward and his queen to sculpture, architecture, and casting in brass and bronze, which were brought to great perfection by Cavallini and other foreign artists, whom they patronized and induced to visit this country. Carving in wood also began to decorate profusely both domestic and ecclesiastical structures.

Tradition also imputes to Eleanora of Castile the introduction of the famous breed of sheep for which Cotswold has been celebrated. A few of these creatures, it is said, were brought from Spain by this queen, and they so increased that in half a century their wool became the staple wealth of England. Afterwards, when war had devastated Spain, and the original breed was lost, some of the Cotswold sheep were sent to Ferdinand of Spain by Henry the Seventh, and thus our debt to that country was repaid.

#### THE CROSS AT GEDDINGTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

In explanation of the accompanying illustration we must remark that the memorial of Queen Eleanora at Geddington, though inferior to that at Northampton, is still of an elegant structure, and of an execution "which would not discredit any age." The cross is triangular, elevated on eight steps, and divided into three compartments. The whole structure is nearly forty-two feet high. The first or lower compartment is solid: each face is divided into six panels, entirely covered with ornamental sculpture, in no inelegant taste or contemptible execution, though too crowded, and therefore wanting in effect. This sculpture is of antique appearance, and delicately carved. To each of the panels is attached a heater shield, charged with the arms of England, Castile, Leon, and Ponthieu. Above this is an embattled turret, from which rise six pillars, supporting as many decorated canopies.

The second story or compartment is also triangular,

naving its angles corresponding with the middle of each side of the lower story. From this unfortunate arrangement it happens that the three statues of the queen have each a pillar rising directly in front of them. Thus in a front view, the statues are, as it were, cut in two by the pillars supporting the canopy, and when the eye is on a line with any of the sides, the whole of the upper part appears out of the centre. The statues are almost similar to those at Northampton, and represent the queen as very beautiful, clothed in a long flowing robe, and a veil which descends to her shoulders, over which is a coronet, the flowers of which are now quite effaced. The air of the head in these figures is graceful, the drapery falls in natural though too minute folds, and the hands and feet are well drawn. These statues bear so great a resemblance to those of the Italian school that it is considered highly probable that Edward had artists of that nation in his service, if not sent for purposely on the occasion. The third or upper compartment of this structure consists of an assemblage of slender pinnacles and finials rising one above another "in a manner neither easy to be drawn nor described." The shaft is again subdivided into a cluster of angular pillars, which terminate in points or finials, ornamented, as are all the others, with oak leaves, and a large flower at top, not unlike the fleur-de-lis. All above these finials is now destroyed; but, from the general form of the whole, and its elegant pyramidal shape, it is conjectured to have terminated in a spire surmounted by a cross.

Mr. Bridges describes Geddington as a village of one hundred and thirty-five houses, and having anciently a royal seat in a close to the north-east of the church, called the Castle or Hall-close, where the surface of the ground is very uneven, and many foundations are still visible. At this castle in 1188 was held by Henry the Second a council or parliament to raise money for an expedition to the Holy Land. In 1194 Richard the First and William, king of Scotland, spent Good Friday at this castle, and went the next day to Northampton. The manor remained the property of the Crown from Henry the Second to Henry the Eighth, when it was granted to the Tresham family, and descended from them through several intermediate possessors, to the duke of Montague about the year 1715, whose representatives, it is believed, still hold it.

#### LINES WRITTEN AT THE TOMB OF A YOUNG LADY.

THOUGH now no longer life's warm current glides  
Through the fair frame which this cold marble hides  
Oh! let not man in ignorance complain,  
That beauty fades, that innocence is vain.  
She lives—where angels shall a sister greet;  
Where parted friends, to part no more shall meet;  
And where, as Heaven's best inmates undefiled,  
Ere long the father shall behold his child.

WE must never prefer the esteem of men to the approbation of God. Every day this sacred rule is transgressed, by sacrificing virtue and conscience to false honour and popular renown.—JORTIN.

IN the mind of the politician, the mechanist, the man of science, the man of trade, or any of the numerous classes which spend their intellectual energies on the things of time and sense, the expected result of their operations must occupy the first place, since it furnishes the only efficient motive for their exertions. But the defender of religious truth acts in obedience to the principle of duty, and leaves the result with God. The men who are, by office, the especial standard-bearers in the army of Christ, are bound to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," whether their efforts are likely to be accounted the greatest or the least in the annals of human achievement.—BISHOP HOPKINS.

#### ON THE CUSTOM OF STAINING THE BODY, AS PRACTISED BY THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

The Henna that is deeply dyed to make  
The skin relieved appear more fairly fair.

THE shrub called by botanists *Lawsonia inermis*, belonging to the Lythrum tribe, is that which yields the celebrated Henna or Alkanna, with which Oriental ladies stain their nails and the tips of their fingers. It was known to the ancients under the name of Ciprus, and in English is called Egyptian privet. It is cultivated throughout India, Egypt, Palestine, and Persia. Sir William Jones speaks of it as being an elegant shrub, about six feet high. The blossoms generally appear between May and August, but it is from the leaves alone that the celebrated dye is obtained. These are gathered, and hastily dried, after which they yield by boiling, their peculiar colouring matter. The Egyptians prepare their henna for use by merely pounding the dried leaves, and then making a paste of them, by adding a little water. Some of this paste is spread on the palm of the hand, and the fingers being doubled, and their extremities inserted into the paste, the whole hand is tightly bound with linen, and kept thus during the night. In the morning the fingers and palm are found to be deeply dyed, so that the colour remains indelible until the growth of the nails renders another application necessary. In the same way the feet are operated upon, and this practice of dyeing the extremities is gone through by all the females of the higher and middle classes, as well as by many of the poorer sort, generally once in a fortnight or three weeks. Mr. Lane tells us, in his account of the modern Egyptians, that the deep orange tint imparted to the nails, or to a larger portion of the fingers and toes, by the use of henna alone, may be not unreasonably considered an embellishment, since it makes the general complexion of the hands and feet appear more delicate, but that many of the ladies stain their hands in a much less agreeable manner, by applying, immediately after the removal of the paste of henna, another paste, composed of quick-lime, common smoke-black, and linseed-oil, which converts the tint of the henna to a black, or to a blackish olive hue.

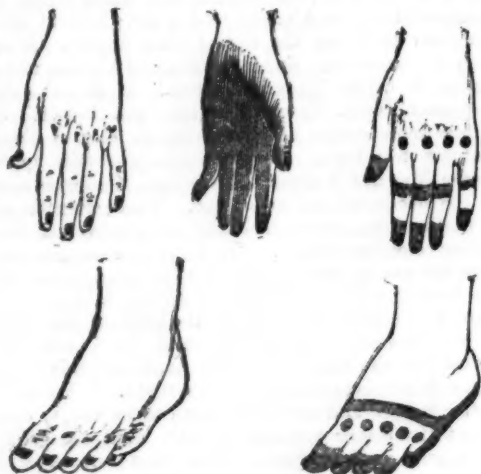
Ladies in Egypt are often seen with their nails stained with this colour, or with their fingers of the same dark hue, from the extremity to the first joint, red from the first to the second joint, and of the former colour from the second to the third joint, with the palm also stained in a similar manner; having a broad dark stripe across the middle, and the rest left red; the thumb dark from the extremity to the first joint, and red from the first to the second joint. Some, after a more simple fashion, blacken the ends of the fingers, and the whole of the inside of the hand.

On important occasions this custom is observed with much ceremony. The day previous to a wedding the friends of the bride accompany her in state to the public baths, and on their return the following customs are observed. After supper, at which a large company is usually entertained, the bride takes in her hand a large lump of henna paste, and approaching her guests receives from each of them a contribution called *nookoot*. This usually consists of a gold coin, which is stuck into the henna, till the lump is thickly covered with these offerings. When she has thus collected from every one, she scrapes off the henna, with the coins, into a basin of water; and taking a fresh lump, she allows her hands and feet to be dyed, and bound up with pieces of linen. In this state they remain until the morning, when they are sufficiently dyed with its deep orange-red tint. Her guests make use of the remainder of the dye for their own hands. This night is called *Leylet el Henna*, or the Night of the Henna.

The use of henna is not, however, entirely confined to the ladies. It is occasionally employed to give lustre to a procession, by slightly tinging the camels with its orange



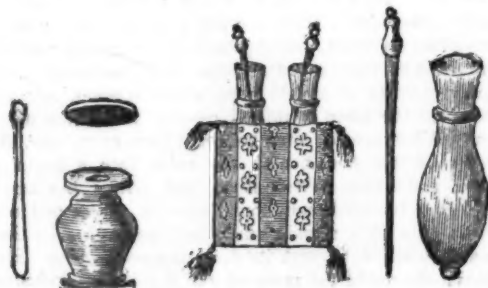
hue. Mr. Lane mentions seeing two processions in which the camels were thus ornamented. One was the religious ceremony of conveying the Kisweh, or outer covering of the sacred Kaabeh of the Mahomedans, and the other the procession of the Mahhonil, a sort of royal litter which is sent empty every year with the caravan of pilgrims to Mecca.



HANDS AND FEET STAINED WITH HENNA.

There is a practice almost universal among Egyptian females of the higher and middle classes, of blackening the edge of the eye-lids with a black powder called *kohhl*. This has the effect of heightening the natural brilliancy of the eyes, which are described as being, with very few exceptions, large, black, and of a long almond form, with long and beautiful lashes, and a fine expression. *Kohhl* is stated to be a collyrium composed of the smoke-black obtained by burning a kind of *liban*, an aromatic resin used in preference to the better kinds of frankincense, as being cheaper, and equally good for the purpose. Another kind of *kohhl* is prepared from the smoke-black produced by burning the shells of almonds, and besides these two, which are said to be beneficial to the eyes, there are several other sorts, employed on account of their supposed medical properties. One of these is composed of several kinds of lead ore, to which are often added sarcocolla, long pepper, sugar-candy, fine dust of a Venetian sequin, and sometimes powdered pearls. Antimony is said to have been formerly in use for painting the edges of the eye-lids.

The instrument used in applying the *kohhl* is a small probe of wood, ivory, or silver, tapering towards the end, but blunt: this is moistened with rose-water, then dipped in the powder, and drawn along the edges of the eyelids. The probe is called *mirwed*, and the glass vessel in which the *kohhl* is kept, *mookhoolah*.



KOHHL VESSELS AND PROBES.

The ancient mode of ornamenting the eyes with the *kohhl* was rather different from that which is most commonly employed at the present time, though Mr. Lane

observed two instances near Cairo, where the black line was continued beyond the eye according to ancient custom.

The antiquity of this custom is proved by the sculptures and paintings in the tombs and temples of Egypt. Indeed, the *kohhl* vessels, probes, and even some of the black powder, have been found in the ancient tombs, and Mr. Lane mentions having specimens of these in his own possession. This custom was also prevalent among the Greek and Hebrew ladies.

In conclusion it may not be uninteresting to give Mr. Lane's opinion of the female countenance among the Egyptians.

Countenances altogether handsome are far less common among this race than handsome figures; but I have seen among them faces distinguished by a style of beauty possessing such sweetness of expression, that they have struck me as exhibiting the perfection of female loveliness, and impressed me with the idea, (perhaps not false,) that their equals could not be found in any other country: with such eyes as many of them have, the face must be handsome if its other features be but moderately well-formed. The nose is generally straight: the lips are mostly rather fuller than those of the men, but not in the least partaking of the negro character. The hair is of that deep glossy black which best suits all but fair complexions: in some instances it is rather coarse and crisp, but never woolly.

## LETTERS TO THE READER.

## No. III.

MY DEAR READER,

I HAVE in my possession several canaries which travelled with me overland from Malta, of which island they are natives. They are larger, and either of a deeper golden yellow, or of a purer white, than the common English canary; two that have scarcely a tinge of yellow on their feathers, are of surpassing beauty, although, I believe, I shall be considered no amateur in this matter for preferring them to the greener variety of the same bird. One of these milk-white little creatures was reared by myself, and the other, attracted by the warbling of two or three young broods which had been mixed together in a large cage, flew into the room in which they were, and suffered itself to be caught. The stranger passed the first night with its new companions, but exceeding the rest in beauty, and having equal strength to assert a very tyrannical disposition, it soon became necessary to remove him to solitary confinement. This had evidently been its accustomed lot. It expressed great satisfaction by bursting out into such a flood of song as for mingled strength and sweetness went beyond anything we had ever heard. So far from being alarmed, it was absolutely greedy of attention, and could not brook even the sight of another canary. Changing its note of triumph at once into a tetchy tweet upon being placed near the young birds, doubling, at the same time, its apparent bulk by fluffing out its feathers on every side, and looking as sulky and jealous as ever a selfish child did at another's happiness. And nothing could exceed its indignation if but a poor sparrow hopped down within range of its cage to pick up the few grains of hemp-seed that were dropt. Its jealousy even extended to an African gazelle that belonged to me, nor was it fond of children; but like a discreet bird, not wanting in self-respect, courted only the society of grown-up people. He reserved, however, his richest and longest strains for our domestic meals, at which time being generally indulged with a place, not at, but on the table, and partaking of no small variety of food, its appetite for the attentions of humanity at last seemed satisfied.

Circumstances, however, sometimes happen to interfere with the pleasures of spoilt birds, as well as of spoilt children. The illness of a friend, in this case, who was unable to bear the violent joy of this civilized bird that poured forth its ceaseless music through the long days

of an unclouded summer, caused its removal to a remote, but cheerful, part of the house. From that hour its heart of song was silent. A few broken notes, it is true, were occasionally heard, but the spirit of song was silent, and the bird moped.

Nearly three months passed in this way when the returning health of my friend enabled me to bring the bird back to our society. And now all its troubles were forgotten. In a few days its tones gushed forth as rich and varied as before. Without changing its food, I had simply tried the effect of kindness. The effect was joy. If such then is our power over the germs of feeling which darkly exist as mere instinct in the very birds that perish, what must be our dominion over the human soul which corresponds in every feature with our own?

I am intimately acquainted with a gentleman who had taken a lad into his service that behaved with much propriety up till a certain period, when he suddenly absconded. He had been sent out upon an errand during the afternoon and not returning, his master, of whose house I was an inmate, wandered about the greater part of the following night under the fear that his servant had met either with violence or an accident. His search proving vain, he left the matter in the hands of the police, who soon came to inquire if he had lost any property, as the lad was known to them as a confirmed thief, and had, in this instance, been taken up for stealing a great coat. My friend gave evidence before a court of justice that after a strict investigation he found no reason for believing that anything had been stolen from him. "No," cried the boy from the bar, "my mistress was so kind to me I could not find it in my heart to steal from her." His mistress was indeed full of affectionate interest towards all her household, and I do not wonder at the stern moral power which her unvarying kindness exerted over her domestics.

It is surely no metaphor when we say that the heart is the seat of feeling, for rarely have I observed such strong and unaffected feelings as influenced the conduct of this lamented lady, whose death, not long after the occurrence that I have just mentioned, was caused by excessive action of that organ. It is a principle common to every form of living matter, that the structure of a part invariably indicates extensive changes in the degree and nature of its functions. The natural exercise of an organ increases its size, while disuse suffers it to waste away. The muscles of a crippled limb are lessened in proportion to the time that they are disabled. The muscles of the arms and chest of a sailor are of a larger comparative size than in men not used to the daily hauling of a ship's tackle, or to some similar employment. The nerves of hearing are larger in man as he exists in a savage state, where his personal safety in no small measure depends upon the continual watchfulness of his senses against causes of external danger, than in the civilized man, whose welfare is provided for by a protective government. The social confidence which the latter enjoys for life and property allows of a subdued condition of the nerves of hearing, sight, and smell, and calls forth the nobler faculties of his mind. As civilization advances, the nerves of the lower senses dwindle in size, and become blunted in function, while the brain expands in bulk, as the mind extends in power. The hands of a person that is afflicted with insanity, (which is the irregular, as reason is the regular, action of the brain,) may be seen frequently pressed to the forehead, as if the material channels of thought were clogged. The hands also wander to the seat of the heart when the body is agitated with strong emotion. These instinctive movements point to the earthly centres of our moral and mental powers. But I am digressing.

Few exercises of the human faculties are more instructive than the observation of human homes. To myself it is a source of continual pleasure and improvement,

especially where some of the inmates are children, to notice the actions and reactions that take place between characters differing in age, original disposition, education and employment. The German philosopher Kant used purposely to invite to his table men of different occupations in order to gain the knowledge that each might have the peculiar means of obtaining, and he also rarely failed to provide the presence of young persons, with the view of relieving the gravity of age.

The result of such a study is to make us familiar with the causes that lead to moral effects, and advancing from passive observation to active experiment, we soon acquire the personal power of setting these causes in action. We thus become the centres of moral forces. For example, I have related to you the anecdote that an unprincipled boy was disarmed of the power of exercising his vice towards those who treated him with tenderness. An important question at once arises to the young experimentalist, whether he can produce the greatest amount of good by exciting the fear, or the love, of those around him.

But I hear you say that the spirit of Christianity has already taught him the duty of universal love. Yes, but if, during our intercourse with society, we are struck with a trait of moral beauty in a spot where we could least expect it, and upon further inquiry into the origin of this solitary virtue, we find it to be reflected, like light, from a heart that is irradiated by the benign principle of our holy religion: and if we can receive this principle into ourselves, and can watch its primary effect upon our own conduct, and its secondary action upon those around us, and find the results to correspond where the cause is the same, I think that such strong inductive proofs of the truth of Christianity are not to be overlooked.

Moral laws act with the same certainty upon crowds as upon individuals. The soft answer that turneth away wrath, and the following practical act of conciliation, are both dictated by the same confidence in the force of kindness.

Soon after the marriage of her present Majesty it was given out by the proper authorities at Manchester that a holiday would be given upon a particular day in commemoration of that event. It was likewise published by certain parties, that a large political meeting of the lower classes would be called upon the same occasion. To preserve, however, the festivity from the possible consequences of any unloyal excitement, the mayor of that town, acting under the advice of the chief of the police, caused the principal places of innocent public amusement to be thrown open free of expense to the working classes at the same hour at which they were invited to attend the political meeting. He also undertook to be personally answerable for any damage that might be done to these institutions.

Here, then, there were two moral forces brought to bear upon large numbers of people whose minds were not sufficiently educated to judge dispassionately of their mutual merits. The spirits of a living mass were either to be calmed by kindness, or troubled by disaffection. I wish, dear reader, that all of us were fully assured in our own minds of the greater force of kindness, except upon very hardened dispositions. When the day arrived, the political meeting attracted only between two and three hundred persons, whereas the Botanical and Zoological Gardens, the Museum, and other similar institutions of Manchester, were filled with workpeople, who were highly gratified and well behaved. The conduct of these crowds showed that they felt the kindness of the authorities. Scarcely five shillings' worth of damage was done to the gardens, and the charges before the police for drunkenness and riot were fewer than upon ordinary days.

It requires, indeed, great experience to know the point at which indulgence ceases to be mercy;

Tender-handed stroke a nettle,  
And it stings you for your pains;  
Grasp it like a man of mettle,  
And it soft as silk remains:

but, *provided we are acquainted with the conditions under which we use them*, moral instruments are fully as capable of being experimentally tried, and as productive of as sure results, as are the methods of natural science. And with this advantage, that while the chemist, as an example of those that handle matter, has to provide a laboratory, together with a variety of expensive apparatus, the student of moral science is tied neither to time nor place; but the hopes, the fears, and wants, of the human soul are everywhere about him. It is true that few possess either the power, or the knowledge, that would be necessary to sway the feelings of a multitude; but every man has at least one heart at his command, and all are apt to underrate the moral consequences that flow from their actions, and example. "Whatever is a man's pursuit in life," wrote Sir Astley Cooper, "it is knowledge and moral character which give to him his real rank and position; and in proportion as he possesses these, so will he be welcomed in society, respected and beloved."

A sense of this personal influence creates an interest in its application. It has been calculated that there would be no lack of charity in England, if all the money that is annually given away in casual relief, were collected into one fund, and fairly divided between the actual sufferers. This would, doubtless, be unattainable; but I may add, if all the feeling of which this national charity is the expression, were to avail itself of established facts, that the general misery would be very considerably lessened. Affection for man must be combined with a knowledge of his constitution, wants and prospects. The channels of affection multiply as the sources of knowledge are enlarged, and the evils that one generation were called upon to cure, have frequently been prevented by the next.

To confine myself to a single point, I think there is no subject, the study of which would be productive of more national well-being, than that of *food in relation to health*. Many diseases of debility that afflict adults arise from causes which acted upon the growth of their childhood. The physical constitution is formed during infancy. The younger the child, the more plastic are its bodily organs, and the more susceptible are its mental and moral functions to external agents. A diseased constitution mainly depends upon an infant being subjected to the action of insufficient or bad food, to the impure air of ill ventilated chambers, to the noxious vapours that arise from a badly drained soil, and to the neglect of artificial warmth. A healthy constitution follows the reverse of all these conditions, and when once formed, will bear great privations in after-life; but nothing will compensate for the early want of proper food.

And creature-comforts are absolutely necessary to the healthy growth of the intellectual faculties. The brain either is stimulated into action by a sufficient supply of wholesome food, or is feebly developed by the current of poor blood that is produced from innutritious food. That organ is not capable of performing, in a creditable manner, the mechanism of thought, unless the blood-vessels are charged with a due proportion of their vital fluid. There is a young child before me, at this present moment, who is naturally lively and intelligent; but its attention is now roused with difficulty, and its eye looks dull. It has gone longer than usual without food. It feels faint; less blood is sent by the heart to the brain, and therefore its senses, those ready instruments of knowledge, are blunted. As soon as the volume of blood is increased by the digestion of another meal, the nerves of its senses will be immediately excited to their natural action.

A person is said to faint away when the circulation of

the blood is for a time partly withdrawn from the brain, and mental insensibility is the certain consequence. But if the body, while in this state, be placed with the head at a lower level than the chest, the blood will flow in a larger current towards the brain, and consciousness will as certainly return. Now, suppose the brain from childhood never to have received a due supply of healthy blood, in consequence of a deficient quantity of food having been taken into the stomach, it is evident that its intellectual functions will be feeble. Instead of a sudden loss of mental sensibility, as may be observed during a fainting fit, a healthy action will never have been established.

In families where there are both sons and daughters you may occasionally see the latter suffering from the effects of these causes, while the boys, with more liberty and stronger wills, grow up free from the debility which afflicts their sisters. These effects are often classed with hereditary diseases. And unfortunately sometimes prove so, but only when the causes that produce them are continued by ignorance through successive generations. I am glad to confirm these statements with the valuable opinion of the late Sir Astley Cooper.

In the practice of his profession there are few points, perhaps, in which he rendered himself more useful to the community, than the change he introduced into the dietary of private schools. Whenever a young lady was brought to him, whom he ascertained to be at a boarding-school, he invariably held the following kind of conversation with her:—"What time do you get up, my dear? At what time do you breakfast? What have you for breakfast? At what time do you dine? Have you nothing between breakfast and dinner? What meals have you after dinner?" And having thus acquired a knowledge of the manner in which his young patient was fed, he would, if he thought her illness at all attributable to deficiency of food, at once write a dietetic table for her use. Then, looking seriously in the parent's face, as he handed the prescription, he would say, "Now, my dear madam, the recovery of your child, and the permanency of her future health, depend upon your enforcing the strictest observance of these rules. That young lady," pointing to his patient, "is either to become a puny, delicate, and perhaps distorted object, or a vigorous and happy woman." *Life of Sir Astley Cooper.*

I might adduce the evidence of the teachers of the pauper children at Norwood (near London), to show, that a deteriorated physical constitution does, in fact, greatly increase the difficulty of moral as well as intellectual cultivation. The intellects of the children of such inferior physical organization are torpid; it is comparatively difficult to gain their attention, or to sustain it; it requires much labour to irradiate their countenances with intelligence, and the irradiation is apt to be transient. As a class they are comparatively irritable and bad-tempered. The most experienced and zealous teachers are gladdened by the sight of well-grown, healthy children, which presents to them better promise that their labours will be less difficult and more lasting and successful.

The facts indicated will suffice to show that noxious physical agencies depress the health and bodily condition of the population, and act as obstacles to education and to moral culture.—*Sanitary Report*, p. 202.

My dear reader, let me entreat you to compare with personal observation these words with facts as they occur in homes. You will thus arrive at the conviction that one of the highest of our Christian duties, after having softened the immediate effects of misery with pecuniary relief, is to rise to the study and prevention of the remote causes of these continued evils. The first cause of all our suffering is doubtless inborn sin; but it behoves us, while we recognise the necessary infirmities of our nature, to turn aside every external agent that further hinders man from recovering his station in the universe.

Believe me yours affectionately, F.

INDIVIDUALS, in society, are each of them advantageous to the community, whilst employed in the stations to which they really belong.—MAUND.



# SEASONAL WILD FLOWERS. MARCH.

As when the rising flood's at hand,  
To one who loiters on the strand  
'Tis pleasant by the ocean's side  
To muse, and mark the incoming tide  
And count the billows of the deep  
As onward step by step they creep,  
Till one broad convex shield o'erlay  
With silver all the brimming bay :—  
Ev'n so 'tis sweet, this vernal time,  
To mark the still advancing prime,  
How in her calm and creeping course  
Boon nature's vegetative force  
Steals onward with resistless flow :  
As promising ere long to throw  
A broad and bloom-embroidered robe  
Of verdure o'er the smiling globe.

MANT'S *British Months*.

WE have heard it said (as if in disparagement of the present age) that a "small modicum" of knowledge on almost every subject which can be mentioned, is now widely diffused throughout society. It may appear to some of our readers, perhaps, that our simple notices of wild flowers, presenting as they do, but a small modicum of scientific information concerning plants, and aiming only at the exhibition of an attractive subject, to which it is our desire to lead the unscientific and the uninformed, are precisely of the character to incur the censure of the observers referred to, while they may not greatly advance the interests of the class for which they are designed.

But it is our own conviction, and on this conviction we act, that considered apart from strict botanical science, the study of plants, the mere power of recognising them, the associations connected with them, the pleasure of learning some few easy facts in their history, and finding out their more evident relationships, is a soothing and delightful occupation, of great importance in its bearing on the character, and much to be prized in a moral point of view. In a world where illusive dreams of pleasure continually "snare the weak sense," and where enjoyment is sought in so many ways which conscience must secretly condemn,—how important it is to engage the mind with pursuits that are

Uncostly, blameless, peaceful, pure!

how advantageous it is to have even a small acquaintance with a subject which makes the pure scenes of nature more delightful to us, and which, when followed aright, exalts our views of the wisdom and goodness of Nature's God.

To nature's ever-varying face  
It gives each day a novel grace,  
New wonders; and unfolds a store  
Of knowledge not perceived before  
To many a healthful walk abroad  
It tempts, and many a weary road  
Enlivens, cheering us along  
As blithely as the pilgrim's song;  
Reveals a garden in the waste,  
And shows a feast before us placed,  
Which he who wills may make his own,  
Himself enriching, robbing none.

We shall commence our notice of the wild flowers of this month with the Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*), a plant better known for its reputed medicinal properties, than for beauty of form, or attractive grace. Yet it is a curious herb, sending up its flowers on fleshy stalks, and displaying no leaves until the flowers have faded. The scaly downy stalks are six or eight inches high, and each has but one flower, which is of a pale yellow colour, and in form like the dandelion. The leaves which follow the blossom are broad, lobed and toothed, and are supposed to resemble the shape of a horse's foot—hence the name of the plant. There will be no difficulty in recognising these leaves, for, besides their shape, they have another mark to distinguish them;—they are green above, but very white and downy underneath.

On scaly stem, with cottony down  
O'erlaid, its lemon-coloured crown,  
Which drooped unclosed, but now erect,  
The Coltsfoot bright develops; deck'd  
Ere yet the impurpled stalk displays  
Its dark green leaves, with countless rays  
Round countless tubes, alike in dye,  
Expanded.

This plant affords another example of a composite flower, and belongs to the section called *radiate*, which contains the larger number of the composite flowers. The florets of the central parts of the flower are tubular, while those of the ray are strap-shaped. Coltsfoot grows freely on a chalky or marly soil, often to the great annoyance of the farmer, who has no means of eradicating its creeping roots, but by ploughing up the soil, removing the plants as they are turned up, and laying down the field to grass.

Now do we begin to observe the exceeding beauty of the catkins or tufts of blossom which depend from the alder, and which ornament the tall slender rods of the willow, or poplar. The former are very beautiful, and repay a close inspection. They have been visible during previous months, but the catkins of the willow have only just put on their most beautiful appearance. At first the spray of this tree was embossed with oval knobs covered with silky down; now those knobs have expanded into beautiful diadems of golden hue which gracefully adorn the russet stem yet but slightly decked with other attire.

Now too, in moist shady places, whether of waste or of cultivated ground, we find the early cardamine, or ladies' smock, (*Cardamine hirsuta*), a near relation of the fair cuckoo flower,

All silvery white,  
That paints the meadows with delight.

The petals, or leaves which compose the flower, are arranged in the form of a Maltese cross, and this is one of the marks by which we know that this pretty plant belongs to a tribe called *cruciferous*, or cross-bearing. This early species of cardamine varies in size and luxuriance according to the situation in which it is found. The plant is of a deep green, more or less hairy, but sometimes, though rarely, quite smooth; it has roundish notched leaves arranged in a *pinnate* or winged form; that is, several little leaflets are arranged along both sides of a common leaf-stalk. The root consists of many white fibres. Another plant now in blossom, and indeed seldom out of blossom, belonging to the same tribe, is the shepherd's purse, (*Capsella Bursa Pastoris*).

But the most attractive of the blossoms, whether cultivated or wild, that grace this early period of the year, is the sweet violet, (*Viola odorata*), now beginning to make its presence known by the rare fragrance it sheds on the air as we tread the sheltered copse, or warm hedgerow, where it has been tempted to put forth its modest blossoms. This lovely flower belongs to a small tribe of plants to which it gives its name as being one of the most interesting specimens. The structure of the flower is similar to that of its relation, the pansy, or heartsease, but it cannot boast an equal brilliancy of colouring. Yet who does not prefer the sweet violet to its more gaudy but nearly scentless companion, which under cultivation assumes so many rich and splendid tints. Lovely and irresistible are violet blossoms, even when offered to us in the streets of the Metropolis, where they are thrust upon our notice in little bouquets lodged within a sheath of white paper intended to set off to advantage the beautiful dark hue of their petals. But, how much more lovely are they as seen reposing and partly hiding themselves amidst the soft bright green of their own sunny bank, on one of those genial days which sometimes come unexpectedly upon us, even in a month that is proverbial for its blustering gales, and unpropitious weather

Beautiful are you in your lowliness;  
Bright in your hues, delicious in your scent:  
Lovely your modest blossoms downwards bent  
As shrinking from our gaze, yet prompt to bless  
The passer-by with fragrance, and express  
How gracefully yet mutely eloquent,  
Are unobtrusive worth and meek content,  
Rejoicing in their own obscure recess.  
Delightful flowerets! at the voice of Spring  
Your buds unfolded to its sunbeams bright;  
And though your blossoms soon shall fade from sight,  
Above your lowly birth-place birds shall sing,  
And from your clustering leaves the glow-worm fling  
The emerald glory of its earth-born light.

Our botanical authorities mention eight native species of violet, which they distinguish thus:—the hairy violet (*Viola hirta*), the sweet violet (*V. odorata*), the marsh violet (*V. palustris*), the dog's violet (*V. canina*), the cream-coloured violet (*V. lactea*), the dwarf yellow-spurred violet (*V. flavicornis*), the fancy violet, or heartsease (*V. tricolor*), and the yellow mountain violet (*V. lutea*). The name *pansy* given to the *Viola tricolor* is a corruption of the French *pensée*, a thought. This name of the flower is alluded to by Shakspeare. Ophelia says,—

There's rosemary, that for remembrance;  
Pray you, love, remember; and there is pansies,  
That's for thoughts.

Sweet violets are not confined to Europe, but flourish amid the palm-groves of Barbary, and bestow their fragrance on the dwellers in Palestine, China, and Japan. According to Hasselquist, the violet is in great request in Syria for making violet sugar, from which sherbet is prepared. The most esteemed sherbet of the Turks, which is drunk by the Grand Signior himself, is made of sugar and violets.

The author of the *Flora Historica* tells us that it was the violet which induced John Bertram, a quaker of Pennsylvania, to study plants.

He had employed his time in agricultural pursuits without a knowledge of botany, but being in the field one day he gathered a violet, examined its formation, and reflected upon it until he became so prepossessed with the flower that he dreamed of it. This circumstance inspired him with a desire of becoming acquainted with plants; he therefore learned for that purpose as much Latin as was necessary, and soon became the most learned botanist of the New World.

Towards the close of March the symptoms of returning Spring are many and decided. In spite of easterly winds and repulsive storms the vegetable world has generally made a great advance ere April comes to clothe the landscape with her more general flush of green.

'Tis pleasant on the ground to pore,  
And with discerning gaze explore  
The leaves that mat the coppice dank,  
The pathway side, or hedgerow bank,  
Chequering the now prolific mould;  
With fine mosaic, manifold  
In figure, size, and tint, inlaid,  
A carpet green by nature made,  
Ere yet of damask work she pours  
From her rich loom the blooming flowers.

Should the weather be tolerably open we shall find at the end of the month an interesting little plant raising its head in such situations as are described by the poet in the lines we have just quoted. This is the Moschatel (*Adora moschatellina*), a dwarf, indigenous plant, flourishing in groves, thickets, and shady hedges. *Adora* means "without glory," and the humble plant is thus named in reference to its unassuming growth, and to the want of show in its blossoms, which are of a yellowish green colour, and nearly of the same hue as the leaves. The root of the moschatel is perennial, and consists of several fleshy scales, with fibres and runners issuing from their interstices. It is a very delicate plant, and in damp weather emits a faint musky smell. The writer has sometimes met with this plant in large masses, com-

pletely covering the soil, where, sheltered by some copse or hedgerow, it found an appropriate habitat. The irregularly cut leaves formed a sort of matting spread equally in all directions, and here and there from amidst their tender green, there arose the solitary simple stalks only two or three inches above the ground, and bearing each its round terminal head of blossoms. It is such a fragile-looking thing, that it excites our wonder to see it venture forth so early in the year. It is sometimes met with in a different situation from those above described, as we find by the poet's description, who also speaks of its having *white* blossoms, an instance of which we have not yet met with.

There in the hollow lane, whose sides  
The native rock o'erarching hides,  
While from its moss-grown fissures well  
The trickling drops, the Moschatel  
Peeped meekly from his rocky bed;  
And scarcely dared his clustered head  
Of star-like blossoms white, with scent  
Faint, not ungrateful, redolent,  
To proffer to the searching sight.

The country walks of the botanist, or of the simple admirer of plants, will now be daily growing more delightful. He will not fail to mark the very beautiful colour of the vegetation of the early spring. What can exceed the pure and tender hue of the young foliage of the larch, for instance. It is perhaps the sweetest imaginable tint of green; but it would be less pleasing were it not for the wondrous variety there is in nature, even in that one colour. The freshness and cleanliness that pervades the vegetable world, is remarkable at every season, but more especially in that which is now approaching. Dr. Macculloch has admirably descanted on the neatness, order, and cleanliness which the Creator has evidently designed to pervade his works, both in the animal and vegetable world. With respect to the latter, he says,

The contrivance for this purpose, in plants, consists in the nature of the surfaces most remarkable in the leaves, where this object is sometimes attained by a high polish and great density, at others by a waxy secretion, at others again by a minute texture of the surface, resembling that of hairs or feathers, or by means of actual down or hairs; as in the flowers, the globular velvety surface which enhances the colours by dispersive reflection, serves for this end also. These prevent the lodgment of water, which is itself injurious, and, with that, of all liquid matters which might soil them, while the dust which might have adhered in a dry state, is easily dislodged by the first shower. How effectual the provisions are is evident; since a *dirty plant* (to use an expressive term) is scarcely ever seen, peculiarly exposed as they are to the adhesion of the soil: and thus does the vegetable world present that universal look of cleanliness and neatness, which is as striking as if there was a hand perpetually employed in no other office: preserving an order that we cannot maintain in our possessions without constant labour. If all the dead portions in leaves and flowers, with little exception, detach themselves, the effect is the same, and so perhaps was the purpose; while we know how disagreeable the effect is, when by housing them, we here interfere with the proceedings of nature.

#### SLEEP.

THIS world is full of such strange sights and noises

That waking eyes and ears have much to bear,  
And e'en when all things round a man look fair,  
And abstract study, in some shade, employs his  
Thoughts from the world apart, he but rejoices  
With a half-pleasure, often marred with care;  
But when the senses all are sealed, there are  
In Sleep's dim empire sweetest scenes and voices:—  
Sleep, then, befriend me! wearied through the day  
With the unpleasant sights and jarring sounds  
Wherewith this fallen and sinful world abounds,  
Lap me in light reflected from far spheres,  
Shadowy, yet stainless, and anon bid play  
Sweet echoes of heaven's music in my ears.—D. D. S.

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